

**ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention is directed to a method for producing optical blanks for EUV microlithographic components. The method includes the step of providing soot particles and spray-drying the soot particles to form an agglomerate. The agglomerate is dry-pressed to form a green body. The green body is heated to form a glass object. The method of the present invention produces optical components having substantially no striae. Further, the method of the present invention produces optical blanks having substantially no low frequency thickness variation. As a result, scattering is substantially reduced when EUV light is reflected from a component produced from the optical blank.

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